

Health Alert:

Reduced Supply of Flu Vaccine

October 5, 2004

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Health Alerts convey information of the highest level of importance which warrants immediate action or attention from Missouri health providers, emergency responders, public health agencies, and/or the public.

Health Advisories provide important information for a specific incident or situation, including that impacting neighboring states; may not require immediate action.

Health Guidances contain comprehensive information pertaining to a particular disease or condition, and include recommendations, guidelines, etc. endorsed by DHSS.

Health Updates provide new or updated information on an incident or situation; can also provide information to update a previously sent Health Alert, Health Advisory, or Health Guidance; unlikely to require immediate action.

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**Health Alert
October 5, 2004**

**FROM: RICHARD C. DUNN
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SUBJECT: Reduced Supply of Flu Vaccine

In light of today's announcement regarding the reduced supply of influenza vaccine, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued interim recommendations for influenza vaccination during the 2004-2005 season.

Who Should Be Vaccinated With the Flu Shot This Season

Priority groups for vaccination with inactivated influenza vaccine this season are:

- all children aged 6-23 months,
- adults aged = 65 years and older,
- persons aged = 2-64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions,
- all women who will be pregnant during influenza season,
- residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities,
- children 6 months-18 years of age on chronic aspirin therapy,
- health-care workers with direct patient care, and
- out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged < 6 months.

Other Vaccination Recommendations

- Healthy persons who are 5-49 years of age and not pregnant, including health-care workers (except those who care for severely immunocompromised patients in special care units) and persons caring for children aged < 6 months should be encouraged to be vaccinated with intranasally administered live, attenuated influenza vaccine.
- Persons in priority groups identified above should be encouraged to search locally for vaccine if their usual health-care provider does not have vaccine available.

Many children aged < 9 years require two doses of vaccine if they have not previously been vaccinated. All children at high risk of complications from influenza, including those aged 6-23 months, who present for vaccination should be vaccinated with a first or second dose, depending on vaccination status. However, doses should not be held in reserve to ensure that two doses will be available. Rather, available vaccine should be used to vaccinate persons in priority groups on a first come first serve basis.

Vaccination of Persons in Non-Priority Groups

- Persons who are not included in one of the priority groups above should be informed about the urgent vaccine supply situation and asked to forego vaccination.

Who Should Not Get Flu Vaccine

People in the following groups should not get flu vaccine before talking with their doctor:

- People who have a severe allergy (i.e. anaphylactic allergic reaction) to hens' eggs

It is prudent to avoid vaccination in people who previously developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) the 6 weeks after getting a flu shot.

More information will be distributed once available. If you have questions, please call the Section for Communicable Disease Prevention at 573/751-6439.